

THE FINANCIAL END.
TRIALS OF THE BOX OFFICE MAN AND THOSE WHO WATCH HIM.

Story of the Bits of Cardboard That Admit One to the Theater—The Manager on the Road Has to Keep His Eyes Open, Says a Man Who Has Seen Through the Mill.

There is something about the wear and tear of the duties incidental to the box office that prematurely ages a young man. Stay by him a single day, and you'll know what it is. When he comes to the theater in the morning, and carries his tickets in the rack and counts out his change and the advance sales for that day, it is with an air of resignation such as kings and queens used to wear just before they were carried out for execution.

There are so many tickets of various kinds and prices prepared for each performance and duly dated and numbered and marked with a big letter or number for the day of the show. This large design is with the view of handing rapidly. There are drawers containing the tickets of the following days, each day by itself, each day's drawer being, however, much better the other was looking, but the old craving for the collection name-upon the young man comes more, and one day last week he broke up. He thought no one would ever find it out, but he was seen, the news was carried to the girl, and she prepared to go to see a certain popular comedian the last night he was here, and the young man called with a cab. The young lady was at the door, he face close upon her, and in her hand the bouquet that cost him \$5. Arrived to speak to the fair one by his side, Oh, that face! She had smeared it with powder, until it had been necessary to cut eyebrows. It was frightful. He stopped. "Are you going in looking like that?"

"Just as you say," was the response. "Well, I can't help it, better. I have used six bottles and feel as well as ever. It has been of great benefit to me as I have gained weight."

The particularity of this business is that everything connected with the box office is cash. The sales are cash sales, and if a combination show is in the house the settlement with the combination treasurer is made in cash at the close of every performance. Simply put, therefore, at the close of the day the difference between the amount of tickets on hand in the morning and the tickets left unsold is represented in the cash drawer.

As a matter of particular fact, however, there are numerous complications incident to the box office and his assistance to the manager and his assistants—the box office young man before all else—becomes prematurely old and abnormally smart grappling with them.

On the rural circuits the traveling manager is obliged to be very wary in his dealings with the box office man. As soon as the public combination comes down to the box office the combination manager or treasurer looking after the interests of the company playing in the house makes his appearance and takes up his stand at the door, where he can watch both the box office and the ticket taker. When you enter any theater where a combination is playing you'll notice this was the case in the theater where you are.

He is there on the presumption that the local people will "do" him if they can. He knows all the tricks and wiles of the box office young man and the doorkeeper and takes nothing for granted.

He sees that you are not too anxious to leave, and that the doorkeeper and his representative of so much cash in the padlocked box. The pasteboard in that box represents the receipts of the house, of which his company has a certain percentage unless played by a company of the first class, to the box, and if he is "up" right, lets the box go out of his sight. There is another watcher at the gallery door taking the same precaution. Of course he knows the nice box office young man wouldn't cheat him, nor for the world!

But at the same time he is on guard against a possible lapse in consequence of the old custom of early rest and early waking is certain to prove in future, as returns of longevity and common experience tell us, that it has proved in the past, most conducive to health and active life. London Lancet.

Charity at a Pawnshop. A man who had been his uncle's slave, now claims that the charity is not so well distributed in this city after seeing the contribution boxes that are hung up in conspicuous places in the smaller of the pawnbrokers' shops. The particulars relative to whom I spoke of it told me that the little boxes were put up every year about the beginning of the summer, and generally were for the benefit of the poor.

"They are taken down just before the holidays and he said that for the past 10 years the one in his shop had averaged between \$12 and \$15, mostly in 5 and 10 cent pieces, although once the agent had found a \$5 piece in it. One doesn't look for such charity among the pawnbrokers, but to persons who get their money from the pawnshop. That is not the slightest need of looking into it."

In London excepting the pawnshop, there is a yearly benefit and sleep, always so scanty, is at any time useful for this purpose.

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The traveling man is always on the defensive. He can't beat the other man. All he can do is to prevent the box office from beating him. He must be up to the tricks and as hard as nail. You know in small towns the local trouper gets a yearly benefit and the doorkeeper takes a benefit. So these two men will play off their friends at every opportunity.

With regard to the box office and the doorkeeper it is perfect. Sometimes they are very sensitive about being watched, and sometimes they tend to be indignant. The most indignant treasurer I ever met was in a place where we caught the doorkeeper, who was on the landing just above the box office, leaning over the floor, with a crack in the floor into the box office.

"Take a popular price house and big audiences of from 1,400 to 1,500 people, and in the rush it is hard to prevent being 'done.' If I can manage to hold them down to \$10 or \$25 margin, I'm pretty well satisfied. A new pocket register for the use that helps keep run of the admissions. You can stand at the receiver, and with your hand in your pocket count every person that goes into the house.

"When the ticket seller and the doorkeeper are close together, there is the most danger, for they will communicate with each other, will not, or by signs or words that the company's representative will not understand. No, I don't think the house itself often profits by these tricks. It is considered axile that the house is 'done' along with the traveling company, though this is not always the case, to my personal knowledge."

"Where ignorance is bliss."

Bridgeman Elect (who has given every reason he can find to justify his marriage)—Besides old man, it will improve my position. Now, you were well off before you married, weren't you?

Hunsucker Husband—Yes, I was. But I didn't know it.—London Judy.

THEY SWORE OFF.
When He Received His Little Visa, She Took Up With May Over.

A prominent young man of this city has been an inveterate cigarette smoker for several years past, and he indulges in the habit to such an extent that it was injuring his health. He has a girl of whom he thinks all the world, and when he got a box of cigarettes his girl has a very good complexion, but has an inordinate love for the use of powder, which habit the young man detests as heartily as she does his cigarette habit. They finally agreed that each would swear off, the one from using powder and the other from smoking cigarettes.

It was hard work for the young man, but every time he hummed for a wad of nicotine his mind pictured the form of his fair one parading down street with her face looking like a pan of dough, and he desisted. This went on for a week, each day the other was looking, how much better the other was looking, but the old craving for the coffee name-upon the young man came more, and one day last week he broke up. He thought no one would ever find it out, but he was seen, the news was carried to the girl, and she prepared to go to see a certain popular comedian the last night he was here, and the young man called with a cab.

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Mr. M. Symons
Baltimore, Md.

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A GREAT VARIETY OF FANCY DRIVING TRAPS.

A large and attractive stock of Farm Wagons, Farm Carts, Buggies, Wagons, Trucks, Street Sprinklers, Lawn Sprinklers.

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W. M. BALDWIN, Vice-President.

Lewis K. Dodd, Cashier.

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